

Acceptance period of vaccination certificates issued in the EU Digital COVID Certificate format indicating the completion of the primary vaccination series

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This **Commission Delegated Regulation** amends the Annex to [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/953](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the acceptance period of vaccination certificates issued in the EU Digital COVID Certificate format indicating the completion of the primary vaccination series.

Background

The EU Digital COVID Certificate framework established by Regulation (EU) 2021/953 allows for the issuance, cross-border verification and acceptance of three types of COVID-19 certificates. One of these is the vaccination certificate, that is, a certificate confirming that the holder has received a COVID-19 vaccine in the Member State issuing the certificate.

Pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2021/953, each Member State is to, automatically or upon request by the persons concerned, issue vaccination certificates to persons to whom a COVID-19 vaccine has been administered. In terms of categories of personal data, the vaccination certificate should contain a set of data that should be included in the vaccination certificate in accordance with the specific data fields indicated in point 1 of the Annex to Regulation (EU) 2021/953.

When Regulation (EU) 2021/953 was adopted, insufficient data was available as to the duration of protection resulting from the completion of the primary series of a COVID-19 vaccine. As a result, the data fields to be included in vaccination certificates in accordance with the Annex to Regulation (EU) 2021/953 do not include data concerning an acceptance period, unlike the data fields to be included in certificates of recovery.

According to currently available evidence, booster doses will increase protection against severe outcomes caused by the 'Delta' variant of concern, and preliminary evaluations also suggest boosters could increase protection against the 'Omicron' variant.

In connection with the administration of booster doses, more and more Member States are adopting rules as to how long vaccination certificates indicating the completion of primary vaccination series should be accepted, taking into account that the resulting protection from infection with COVID-19 appears to be waning over time. Unilateral measures in this area are likely to cause disruption and undermine confidence in the EU digital COVID certificate.

To avoid diverging and disruptive measures, it is thus necessary to establish, for the purpose of travel, a standard acceptance period of 270 days for vaccination certificates indicating the completion of the primary vaccination series.

This proposal takes into account the guidance of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control regarding the administration of booster doses as of six months after completion of the primary vaccination series and provides for an additional period of three months to ensure that national vaccination campaigns can adjust and citizens can have access to the administration of boosters.

Content

In order to ensure a coordinated approach, this delegated Regulation amends the Annex to Regulation (EU) 2021/953 concerning the data fields to be included in the vaccination certificate in order to establish, for the purpose of travel, **a standard acceptance period of 270 days** for vaccination certificates indicating the completion of the primary vaccination series.

Specifically, Member States should not accept vaccination certificates indicating the completion of the primary vaccination series if more than 270 days have passed since the administration of the dose indicated therein. At the same time, they should not, for the purpose of travel, provide for an acceptance period shorter than 270 days. Within this standard acceptance period, vaccination certificates indicating the completion of the primary vaccination series should continue to be accepted by a Member State even if it is already administering booster doses.

The standard acceptance period of 270 days should apply to certificates indicating the completion of the primary vaccination series, be it a single-dose primary course, a two-dose primary series, or, in line with the vaccination strategy of the Member State of vaccination, a single dose primary course of a two-dose vaccine after having previously been infected with SARS-CoV-2. It should apply to all vaccination certificates, that is, regardless of the COVID-19 vaccine indicated therein.

The standard acceptance period should not be included as a new data field in the vaccination certificate, but should be applied at the level of verification, by adapting the mobile applications used to verify EU Digital COVID Certificates. If a relevant vaccination certificate indicating a date of vaccination exceeding the acceptance period of 270 days is presented to the verifier, the mobile application used for verification should indicate the certificate as expired.